

The Four Big Problems and the "Big Four"

CLOSED in the "White House" in Paris, the Four are putting the finishing touches to the peace treaty, while around them is an aura of secrecy that causes the world to wonder. Starting with the conclusion that the treaty is not yet finished, the rest merges into conjecture. No one knows what elements are to blame for the delay, since President Wilson's threatened disclosures are still unpublished, if we except his statement that the league of nations commission has thrown no sand in the machinery.

Four main points, however, are still to be settled. They are:

1. The proper treatment of Bolshevism.
2. The territorial claims to be made on the Central Empires.
3. The amount of indemnity to be exacted from Germany and the method of payment.
4. The final acceptance of the league of nations.

Resultant to the lack of information available, optimism and pessimism regarding the final result are reflected in the Paris circles and in turn in the articles of the correspondents submitted to the press. Thus on the same day the following forecasts on the peace conference saw light:

In The Tribune Frank H. Simonds stated:

"The league of nations is dead. All chance of a real settlement of European problems is at an end. A desperate effort is being made to get together a patched-up peace within the next ten days which shall at least put an end to unrest and economic paralysis in the world."

While the staff correspondent of "The New York Sun" has announced:

"Real progress is being made toward a peace treaty, with the indications that it will be based on practical ideas and not upon the original conception of a league of nations, which even some of its ardent supporters admit now was an illusion."

In "The New York Herald" Truman H. Talley wrote:

"Marking time" is the way the French press describes the present tedious progress of the peace conference. Meanwhile the editorial writers are directing their stinging literary wrath against the secret diplomacy of the conferees—the secret diplomacy lately condemned by them and now invoked without result.

"Today there appeared in all the afternoon newspapers here what appeared to be an official denial—although no authority was named—of all that has been printed of late concerning the deliberations of the Council of Four. The denial eloquently concluded with the statement that all the printed news concerning the deliberations was false."

When shown the statement concerning the falsity of the deliberations, American officials said there was "an element of truth in it, inasmuch as the

reparation and territorial problems were shifting hourly and that each hour was bringing out new French proposals, which usually were so intricate that experts needed to be summoned to fathom them."

Bolshevism

HOW to deal with Bolshevism is perhaps the most vital problem confronting the Four. It comes down to two constantly recurring theories. The French view has been outlined by Frederick Moore in The Tribune as follows:

"Renewed efforts are being made constantly by the French in the hope of persuading President Wilson to countenance military action against Bolshevism, but they are again being told definitely that America will not assist with men or money."

Thus he continues:

"These conflicts of opinion as to how to deal with Bolshevism again have been brought into the foreground by the Hungarian action, and there are indications that Germany may adopt similar measures in an endeavor to avoid the penalties which the Allies intend imposing upon her."

The suggested antidote is the rationing of Russia on some such system as was used in Belgium, using some neutral country as an intermediary—possibly Denmark, and according to a recent Tribune dispatch:

"It seems likely that the flirtation of the leaders of the peace conference with the Bolsheviki will lead soon to the recognition of Lenin's government by the United States and the Allies—the only possible outcome of the present policy of non-interference in Russian affairs."

"The Washington Post" inquires, however:

"What compromise or bargain, then, can be made with Lenin? . . . How can the allied nations forsake the innocent and loyal millions of Russia and consign them to death for the sake of keeping Lenin from threatening the Allies?"

And "The Montreal Daily Star" rejoins:

"We cannot reason with the Bolshevist. The only weapons he understands are the weapons of his own choice. We must either exterminate Bolshevism by force of arms or isolate its victims like the plague. Within fifty years Bolshevism or democracy will rule the world."

Territory

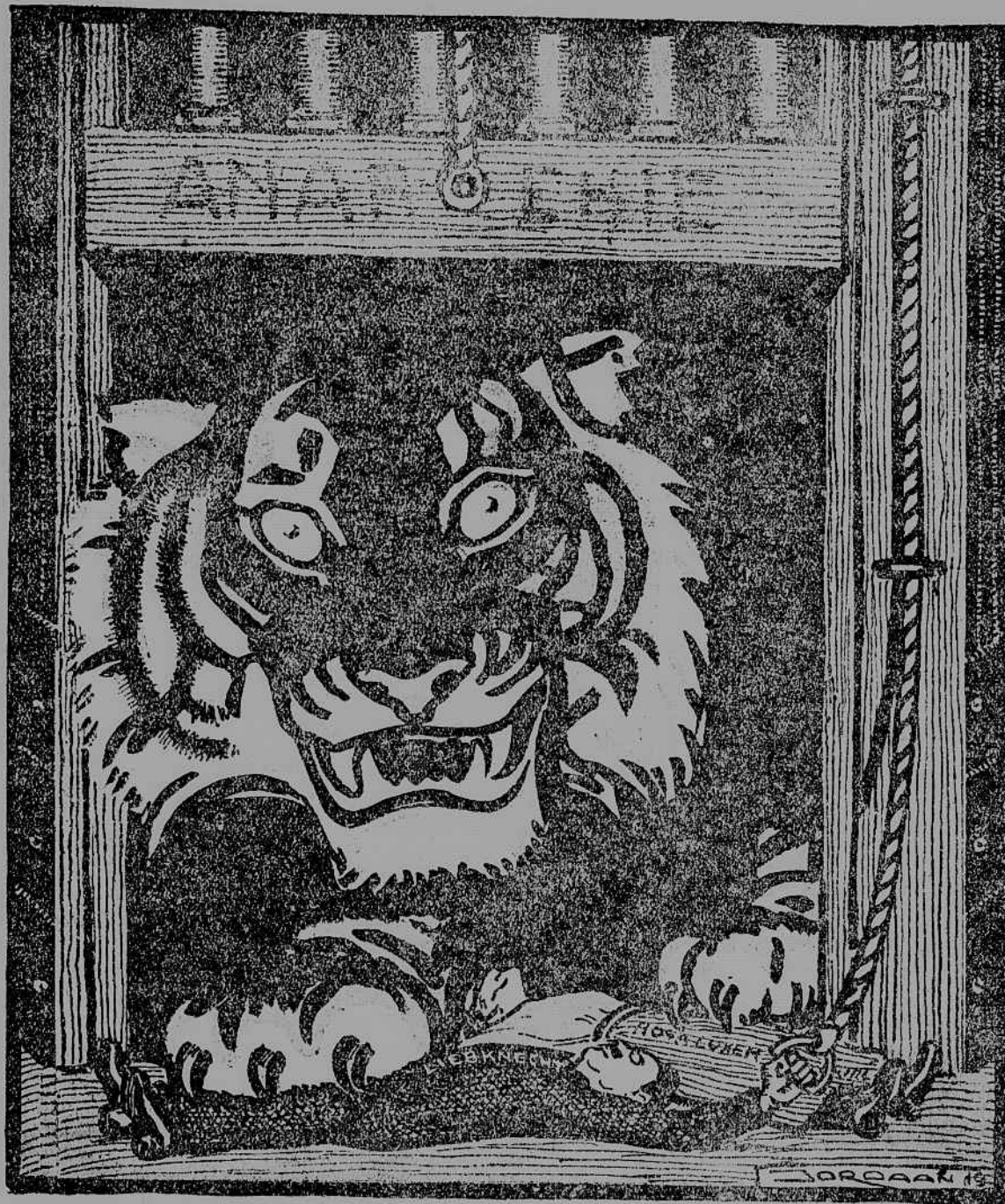
REGARDING the tangle over territory, "Le Journal," of Paris, says:

"What a perspective of equivocation lies before us! There is talk of neutralizing Danzig and the outlets of the Vistula. For the basin of the Saar all sorts of queer combinations have been imagined—will the French proprietorship of the coal mines be final or will it be provisional, with the maintenance of German political sovereignty overhung by the Damoclean sword of a plebiscite which may nourish the fires of racial antagonism for years to come?"

According to one of the American experts, the whole situation is decidedly difficult. He continues:

"The situation is extremely difficult, particularly as regards the Western frontier of Germany. President Wilson, in a conciliatory spirit, has been willing to do most

Surrender to This Monster?



Out of his murky den prowls the creature whose name is Bolshevism. This creature has been pictured in many moods and guises. In the present instance our cartoonist is a Holland artist. He stages his portrayal at the time Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg met their fate; but the striking feature of this drawing is not the tragedy in the foreground but rather that look of away and beyond which gleams in the eyes of the enfranchised beast.

—Notenkanker, Amsterdam.

anything to assure French security short of substitution of engagements made at the time of the armistice.

"The French have been assured of every military protection along the Rhine and for fifty kilometres (about thirty-five miles) east of that river, even to the extent of considering that any military activity in that section shall be looked upon as a hostile act. But this is not considered enough and additional claims lead to the conviction that they are open to construction as meaning something more than military security and verging on territorial control."

"The President is not willing to go that far in creating more Alsace-Lorraine situations, and it is this stand against these claims which is causing the delay until some middle ground is found."

Concerning the Saar valley, with its rich coal fields, "The Brooklyn Daily Eagle" has made the following prediction:

"We shall soon know the decision of the conference in regard to this difficult question. One thing only is certain at this time: The representatives of the United States and those of Great Britain will not sustain the French claim to the Saar Valley, and in the face of their opposition the claim will be renounced. It has been a dangerously disturbing factor in the deliberations at the Quai d'Orsay, and the sooner it is shelved the sooner will the peace treaty, too long delayed, be ready for signatures."

Opposing the French view, as voiced by Marshal Foch, that the Rhine provinces should form a bulwark against future German aggression, "The Philadelphia Inquirer" has outlined views evidently held by certain members of the conference:

"Marshal Foch was quoted as saying that as an insuperable barrier against another German attack all the territory west of the Rhine should be brought under the French jurisdiction. That was the view of a soldier who took no account of any other than military considerations. The region whose annexation he proposed is occupied by a large German population, and its enforced surrender would not only violate an important principle to which the Allies have assented, but it would be a certain source of future trouble. It is not conceivable that its inhabitants would willingly acquiesce in the change of their political status. They would be as hostile toward Paris as the Alsatians and Lorrainers were toward Berlin, and the consequent situation would eventually become intolerable."

On the other hand, The Tribune believes that the opinion of the Entente generalissimo should be sustained, opposing editorially:

"When Marshal Foch says that the essen-

tial defence of France is the Rhine he is to be believed above any statesman. His is the duty to expound the military fact. It is the statesman's duty to recognize that fact and square it, as it can be squared in essentials, with the rights of the Rhine provinces to self-government and a free development."

"Because of this cleavage many authorities see a deadlocked conference resulting from the naturally intense desire of France for future guarantees against aggression and adequate remuneration by Germany for her war losses, balanced on the other side by the fear of a future war against a Hungarian-Russian-Germanic alliance under the banner of Bolshevism which it is thought may be precipitated by the refusal of Germany to sign the treaty. Among the clauses which President Ebert has announced Germany will not consent to—

"is the confiscation by France of the Saar territory, the annexation of the left bank of the Rhine, the demand for indemnities exceeding the income of the nation, the reduction of the army to 75,000 men in the face of the growing Bolshevik danger and the looting of the German colonies in Africa. If all or most of these demands are in the peace terms, Germany will not sign."

Fiume for Italy is still in debate, and some of the most impassioned writing of the week has concerned whether or not to throw the Polish claim for Danzig with its consequent outlet to the sea into the scrapheap of compromise. The point of the German colonies seems to have been settled, but the Saar valley and the Rhine provinces are still before the council.

Indemnity

A FRENCH Senator has laid down the French idea of financial reparation as follows:

"The French people look at the vast debt they have assumed during the war and see three solutions possible:

"First, that Germany pay.
"Second, that the league of nations take over the whole question of financial rehabilitation of exhausted countries.
"Third, that France go bankrupt, which would drag others down and mean financial chaos to the entire world."

"Let us leave the third possibility out of consideration. As for the second, there has not been as yet any serious suggestion that the league of nations assume the colossal financial burden. There remains the first, which seems simple, yet the French-

men hear that America and even Great Britain are incessantly finding new difficulties and new reasons for tender consideration of the German pocketbook."

How Britain feels about reparation as it affects Britain is suggested in the following Associated Press dispatch:

"Colonel Claude Lowther, Unionist, declared that the delegates to the peace conference in Paris needed to be reminded that a majority of the members of the House of Commons solemnly had pledged themselves to exact the utmost farthing from the Germans. He said he hoped Great Britain was not truckling to the United States and bowing before President Wilson, who could philosophically bear every country's financial embarrassment but his own."

This is the final arrangement of payment, according to a dispatch published by "The New York World":

"The treaty clause on reparations will include this point: Germany is to be compelled to accept responsibility for all damages included within the seven categories based upon the damages inflicted upon life and property of a non-military nature. In effect, she will be asked to sign a blank check for the sum involved, which is not to be placed immediately at the final figure, but is to be calculated at a meeting to be held within two years from the date of the treaty signature."

"For purposes of guidance, computations of the Allies are to be accessible to the Germans, and these will show an approximate total of \$45,000,000,000 as the amount to be paid."

"It will be determined that this sum, either in full or in a large part, shall be paid within a period of one generation, or thirty years, with the possibility of composition if Germany shows good faith and the possibility of prolonging the period of maturity if she proves recalcitrant. She is to pay at once \$5,000,000,000, of which \$1,000,000,000 is to be applied upon food and supplies allocated to her, the balance being used for immediate payments to Belgium, France, Serbia and other countries which suffered from invasion."

Naturally enough, intense anxiety is evident in France over the result, the belief in some quarters being that vital interests of the republic are on the point of being sacrificed to secure an amicable termination. The French attitude is clearly estimated by Frederick Moore in The Tribune, when he says:

"It is impossible to disguise the terrible anxiety to which the whole of the French people are prey in this the final week for the discussion of the treaty of peace. The pride of the country has been unanimous in setting forth conditions necessary to

save France, and one does not have to read between the lines to know that the people fear that they are to be ground between the two Anglo-Saxon millstones."

"I talked at length yesterday with a French Senator of great ability and liberal outlook, who spoke with entire frankness, only on the promise that his name would not be used."

"You will hear sometimes foolish statements that Germany has really won the war," he said. "Of course, she hasn't, but neither has France. Two nations only can be said to have won the war in the sense that they have emerged from it with benefits more than counterbalancing their losses."

"We must not, we are told, press Germany too hard," comments "The Boston Evening Transcript." And—
"We must not permit France to make herself safe on her eastern frontier. Instead, we must leave to Germany her fulcrum, her base, her secure position for a future attack on France; otherwise we shall have Bolshevism in Germany—Bolshevism, which is being shaken by the Prussian Junkers before the eyes of Europe as a vision of terror! If this programme is indeed to be allowed to succeed, how can we stand up and face our returning Yankee division when it marches through the streets of Boston? By such a surrender to Germany, by such a sacrifice of France, the American representative at Paris would have gone far to mock and to neutralize the heroic labor and sacrifice of our boys on the fields of battle."

Indeed, the question of the seriousness of the German attitude is looming large, together with the debate as to how a possible German refusal to sign will be met.

As far as Germany is concerned, President Ebert has pointed out her situation in terms singularly conclusive for a conquered nation.

"It is a matter of life or death for us," he is quoted as saying. "If we give up the Saar region, Danzig, Alsace-Lorraine, the southern frontier and the African colonies, Germany will be unable to support herself, let alone pay her war debts."

Thus "The Washington Post" sees the peace conference in the position of endeavoring to eat the cake and have it at the same time, commenting on the Herr Ebert statement as follows:

"What do the Allies want? Do they want a strong and prosperous Germany, with a revived industry and commerce—a Germany that will be able to pay a huge annual tribute to wipe out the claims against her of the people she has injured? Or do they want Germany reduced to impotence, even as a potential menace to peace, an agricultural people living from the produce of the soil, as was the case in Germany before 1870? The Allies cannot 'eat their cake and have it.' If they desire huge indemnities, they must put Germany on her feet; they must open the seas and the world to her commerce and provide her with all the raw material she wants."

"If she is reduced, on the other hand, to the role of an agricultural people, they must renounce all idea of indemnities and must

further be prepared to see a flood of emigration from Germany. One-third of the population must find refuge in other countries under penalty of starvation if they should try to live solely from the soil of the empire. There is, therefore, no finality in the Allies' conditions or in Germany's acceptance or refusal so long as these conflicting conditions are not reconciled."

The League

THE league of nations is still in a formative stage, with the second draft of the covenant completed and carrying many revisions, though it is stated that it is a question of days "before the Monroe Doctrine feature, the Japanese demand for racial equality and Leon Bourgeois's amendments regarding inspection and control of armaments will be agreed upon."

While awaiting the publication of the revised covenant, Baron Makino's statement insisting on the racial equality of all nations is believed by some to prestage another delay in the treaty. According to "The Boston Globe," the racial equality problem will have to be solved now:

"East and West have come face to face at Paris. Japan has asked that its subjects be placed on a basis of equality with other people inside the league of nations. Christendom is conscious that one of the master nations of the world is outside the Caucasian race."

"For one thousand years all equal diplomatic intercourse has been between white nations. Turkey, thrust into the European concert toward the end of the nineteenth century, was not an exception. The powers were obliged to deal with the 'sick man of Europe' because the sequel to his death would have been a scramble for his estate. But the premiers did not regard the Grand Vizier as their equal; and he and his master accepted the inferior place, life being sweet."

"It is different with Japan. There are five great powers in the world—Great Britain, America, France, Italy and Japan. Alone of all the colored races, her people have broken into the charmed circle."

"America cannot dodge the issue which Japan is raising now and which China and India are sure to complicate in a few decades. The real choice open to the world is whether it is to be faced separately or together. Must each nation struggle alone toward a solution, or shall they reason together and meet the race question within a league of nations?"

According to a recent dispatch from Paris the French view of the situation is that—

"the principal Japanese demands are undeniably acceptable, though it may be unnecessary and possibly unwise to include the specific statement in the league project."

It is remarked incidentally that "this spirit of compromise and willingness to avoid a deadlock dominates all the work now going on, from the Council of Four down."

Who Will Pay France?



The characters here are easily recognized. The English cartoonist sets his scene in a French restaurant, where the following conversation ensues:

The patron: He has smashed up nearly everything in the place, and stolen the spoons, and now he says he won't pay my bill.

The guest in the foreground: "I think justice would be done if the wretched man paid for his dinner."

The patron: Eh, bien! Perhaps monsieur is willing to pay the balance? (No response).

—The Passing Show.

Will Germany Sign?



The German nation is here represented as having broken the strong chain of Kaiserism and militarism. But the Italian cartoonist puts these words into the mouth of the conference at Paris: "The German Republic! Um. She frightens us more than the Germany of yesterday!"

—L. Astino.